

Personnel Staffing Transition Plan from Response to Recovery: Summary Hurricane Harvey Response

As hazard evaluations are coming to a conclusion, Unified Command (UC) has assessed the remaining workload to complete ESF-10 assignments under FEMA Mission Assignment number 433DRTXEPA0101, and transition to the recovery phase of operations. The plan below describes the status of ESF-10 operations in each branch with projected timeframes to completion, and personnel resources required. As a result, UC is recommending initiation of an organized, thoughtful, and gradual reduction in personnel in the field to facilitate a smooth transition back to normal operations with state and local authorities.

On September 7, 2017, Texas Governor Abbott created the Governor's Commission to Rebuild Texas. EPA agreed to support the Governor's Commission to effectively coordinate the State's effort to recover and rebuild public infrastructure damaged by Hurricane Harvey and will do so under a separate FEMA Mission Assignment for Long-term Recovery. The duties of the Commission shall include: assisting local governmental entities and nonprofit organizations to assess and identify rebuilding needs and to navigate state and federal resources available for the rebuilding effort; advocating for the interests of state and local government on matters related to disaster response; and providing expertise and assistance to local governmental entities and nonprofit organizations throughout the rebuilding process.

Assumptions

1. No ESF-8 mission assignment (private drinking water well sampling)
2. No ESF-10 HHW/white goods/e-goods mission assignment
3. Moderate assistance required for debris management
4. No new mission assignments
5. Community liaison activities through October 2. One Community Liaison per county, plus one team lead for each branch, and an overall Community Liaison Lead
6. Moderate assistance required for Rebuild Texas (Long-term Recovery Mission Assignment pending)

Current Workload and EPA Personnel Needs Forecast

Corpus Christi Branch:

- DW/WW assessments are completed.
- ASPECT missions are 100% completed and ASPECT demobilized on September 12, 2017.
- Initial reconnaissance and Hazard Evaluations of all areas is 100% complete in all 14 counties. Some quality assurance checks are still occurring.
- Recovery of containers and characterization is 95% complete.

- ESF-10 field operations are projected to be completed by September 18, 2107, and TCEQ has indicated it has capacity to handle any subsequently identified hazard evaluations, container recoveries, and responses to discharges/releases from facilities.
- The EPA Incident Management Team will remain in Corpus Christi through the end of all ESF-10 activities.
- As of September 14, 2017 EPA personnel needs are projected to include:
 - 10-12 EPA staff for IMT
 - 1 OSC Branch Director
 - 1 OSC for Recovery Teams
 - 15 Community Liaison personnel through October 2, 2017

Houston Branch:

- ASPECT missions are 100% completed.
- DW/WW assessments are projected to be completed by September 15, 2017.
- Reconnaissance and Hazard Evaluations are 100% complete in 16 of 16 counties in this area.
- Recovery of containers and characterization is 40% complete.
- ESF-10 field operations (except disposal) are projected to be completed by October 10, 2017.
- As of September 14, 2017 EPA personnel needs are projected to include
 - 1 OSC Branch Director
 - 1 OSC Deputy Branch Director
 - 1 Public Information Officer
 - 1 Planning Section Chief
 - 4 OSCs for Recovery Teams through October 10, 2017
 - 17 Community Liaison personnel through October 2, 2017
 - 4 landfill/staging area field observers through October 22, 2017

Current forecast for Port Arthur/Beaumont Branch:

- DW/WW assessments are projected to be completed by September 14, 2017.
- ASPECT missions are 100% completed.
- Reconnaissance and Hazard Evaluations are 80% complete in the 9 counties in this area of responsibility; additional assessment is somewhat dependent on floodwaters receding.
- To date, there are relatively few containers requiring recovery in Port Arthur/Beaumont.
- ESF-10 field operations (except disposal) are projected to be completed by September 30, 2017.
- As of September 11, 2017 EPA personnel needs are projected to include:
 - 1 OSC Branch Director
 - 3 OSCs for Recovery Teams
 - 10 total Community Liaison personnel through October 2, 2017

Summary

EPA has deployed personnel to the JFO in Austin to assist with the transition from response to Long-Term Recovery efforts in support other Governor's Commission to Rebuild Texas. EPA is awaiting a long-term recovery mission assignment from FEMA to support this activity.

Organizationally, the EPA ESF-10 Hurricane Harvey response is aligned with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regions. Three branches were established: Corpus Christi (Alpha), Houston (Bravo), and Port Arthur/Beaumont (Charlie). This will facilitate TCEQ's ability to handle remaining situations.

The TCEQ regional offices will review any remaining items left in their geographic area and will work with respective counties on closure of ESF-10 activities. UC is developing a plan, "**Operational Activity Transition Record for Orphan Drum and Container Collection, and Spills/Discharges from Facilities**", which will formally document, work completed, operational status, and remaining work to be done in a given Branch. Once UC agree that federal ESF-10 support is no longer needed in a given Branch, the Incident Commanders for each respective agency will sign off on the plan and obtain agreement from local elected officials.

EPA/TCEQ will have their own "transition record" plan for orphan containers; the USCG/TGLO will have a separate plan for vessels. This is due to the fact that there are two different Mission Assignments, with a corresponding different set of mission objectives for EPA/TCEQ and USCG/TGLO.

Before being released from the incident, critical resources for recovery efforts will be evaluated for assignment to Bravo Branch which has the majority of field work to be completed.